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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/575,690	08/23/2006	Torsten Brandenburger	3632.1003-000	3600

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EXAMINER

DEAK, LESLIE R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3761

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04/21/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/575,690	Applicant(s) BRANDENBURGER ET AL.	
	Examiner LESLIE R. DEAK	Art Unit 3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 April 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 18-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 18-34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12 April 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/12/06; 1/12/09</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 18-34 are objected to because of the following informalities: Applicant uses the language "characterized in that..." to introduce claim limitations. The Examiner suggests the use of "comprising" or "consisting" in order to define whether the limitations are open-ended or closed to any other modification. Appropriate correction is required.
3. With regard to claim 30, it is unclear from the claims and specification what holding in a "keyed" manner comprises. For the purposes of Examination, the Examiner is assuming that the membrane is compressed between the upper and lower connection parts.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 3761

5. Claims 18-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 100 30 474 C1 to Rahimy in view of US 5,100,394 to Dudar et al.

In the specification and figures, Rahimy discloses the apparatus substantially as claimed by Applicant. With regard to claim 1, Rahimy discloses a connector with a connection part 2 with a channel-shaped recess 8 in which a self-sealing membrane 4 is arranged, wherein the recess has openings at either end (see FIG 1). The connector further comprises a break-off part 6 that closes the recess and is connected to the connection part 2 above the connection-side opening. The connection part has an internal cone above the membrane (see FIG 1).

Rahimy fails to disclose that the membrane comprises a slit to receive a syringe. However, Dudar discloses a connector with a channel and a membrane 52 comprising a resealable opening or slit 66 that allows for repeated access with a blunt cannula, preventing accidental needle sticks (see Dudar FIG 3 and accompanying text). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to add a slit as disclosed by Dudar to the connection apparatus disclosed by Rahimy in order to allow repeated resealable access by a blunt cannula, as taught by Dudar.

With regard to claims 19 and 20, Rahimy illustrates that the connection part 6 comprises a female Luer connector thread (unlabeled, flange under weakened zone 7) and an internal cone.

With regard to claim 21, Rahimy illustrates that break-off part 8 is connected to the connection part 6 via a rupture zone at 7.

With regard to claims 22 and 23, Rahimy illustrates that the connection part has an upper section 2 and a lower section 3, wherein the pieces are fixed in a snap-in fashion by flange 1 (see FIG 1), wherein the membrane is clamped between the upper and lower sections.

With regard to claims 24-26, the Rahimy membrane 4 comprises a lower annular portion 11 and with an intermediate pieces that leads to an upper plate-shaped portion with a mould-shaped recess 5, wherein the annular portion is clamped between the upper and lower sections of the connection parts 2, 3 (see FIG 1).

With regard to claims 27 and 28, the Rahimy connection part comprises two-inwardly-facing shoulders, upon which the annular portion and plate-shaped portion of the membrane rest (see FIG 1).

With regard to claims 29 and 30, Applicant is claiming the functional relationship between the membrane and the connection parts. It is the position of the Examiner that the apparatus suggested by the combination of Rahimy and Dudar is capable of being assembled in the manner claimed by Applicant, thereby suggesting the limitations of the claims.

With regard to claim 31, Rahimy illustrates that the annular portion of the membrane has a smaller diameter than the inner diameter of the channel-shaped recess in the connection part (see FIG 1).

With regard to claim 32, Dudar discloses that when a blunt cannula enters the membrane, it separates the slit, allowing the membrane to separate without the cannula penetrating the surface of the septum.

With regard to claim 33, Rahimy illustrates break-off portion 6 as a flat grip, And further illustrates that the connector may be connected to bag 19 (see FIG 3).

Double Patenting

6. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Art Unit: 3761

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

7. Claims 18-34 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of copending Application No. 10/514,817. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because each claims a tubular connection part, a break-off seal, and a septum with the same claimed shape.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LESLIE R. DEAK whose telephone number is (571)272-4943. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tanya Zalukaeva can be reached on 571-272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3761

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Leslie R. Deak/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3761
20 April 2009